

Government wants to "get out of the way" - Wilson

The federal Progressive Conservative party wants to "get out of the way" of the private sector, Finance Minister Michael Wilson told a crowd of over 200 gathered for a fundraising dinner in Hornby Tuesday night.

The finance minister was in Halton Hills to promote the new tax system that levels a nine per cent tax on almost all manufactured goods. He was also here to show support for local PC Halton-Peel MP Garth Turner.

"We have generated and built a better Canada, a stronger Canada, a Canada that is able to build more," Mr. Wilson told the crowd.

The government's aim is toward "removing obstacles to foreign investment" and toward "privatization of companies that no longer serve a public service," Mr. Wilson said.

The new tax will come into effect Jan. 1 next year and will affect "most of the things we buy in Canada."

Today's services don't bear any tax, said the finance minister, but that will change in 1990.

Mr. Wilson said the former Liberal government was to blame for Canada's increasing deficit.

Government spending is at its lowest point since the 1960s, Mr. Wilson said. The government makes less revenue now than it did in the 1970s and in 1979, the "pressure cooker came off" and Canada had one of its worst recessions.

"The government of the day was treating the symptoms of the problem (and) not dealing with the cause," Mr. Wilson said.

The Conservatives planned to reduce the federal deficit on a "gradual basis" after taking power in 1984.

"We knew we couldn't do it overnight," said the finance minister. But he said the Conservatives have "a clear sense of direction," and the aim is to reduce the deficit and to create a "fairer" tax system.

"If Canada is going to have a future it must solve today's problems," said Mr. Turner.

"I think the deficit is too high and I think we still spend too much money." Spending this money has put Canadians "at the breaking point of taxation," he said.

"We hope we can find the government ways to turn this tax steam roller back."

Although Mr. Turner said there are problems with a growing deficit, that sits at \$29 billion, Canada has hope for recovery.

"We are not without our problems, but we are also not without our leaders," he said.

It will take "discipline" to reduce the federal deficit, the

finance minister said. He agreed with Mr. Turner who said the budget is "too much on the revenue side."

But he added "the easy areas (to cut) are gone." The government has "some tough decisions to make."

The fundraising dinner at former Transport Minister James Snow's farm in Hornby Tuesday followed a tax committee meeting of Halton Hills members.

The dinner was \$150 a plate and held to raise funds for Mr. Turner's Halton-Peel Conservatives and to give the finance minister a forum to express the party's stance on tax reform.

Guests from Halton Hills and surrounding areas were able to meet with and speak to Mr. Wilson.

Members of the press asked Mr. Turner if he found the transition from newspaper editor of the Toronto Sun to House of Commons Member of Parliament a difficult one.

"There's been some heat, but that's okay, I've enjoyed it," said the MP.

"I was probably the only guy in Canada who supported Michael Wilson and supported Douglas Small (the Global news reporter who first leaked the federal government's budget in April).

He said he is no longer a columnist who criticizes Michael Wilson from a distance, but now understands that the finance minister is "decent, and honorable."

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